



coverstory
BY JAY BOBBIN

"Macy's 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular" airs Monday on NBC.

From concerts to 'Star Wars,' TV helps America celebrate July 4th

As usual, television will honor the red, white and blue with special Independence Day programming on Monday, July 4. Here's a look at some of the highlights.

"A Capitol Fourth 2022" (PBS; check local listings): Country music's Mickey Guyton plays host as this traditional special returns to the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Darren Criss (who's been having a well-received Broadway run in a revival of "American Buffalo"), Yolanda Adams, Keb' Mo' and Andy Grammer are slated to perform, with Jack Everly conducting the National Symphony Orchestra.

"Macy's 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular" (NBC): The shells that light up the sky (and, in turn, TV screens) colorfully will be launched from five barges positioned in the East River. The full talent lineup typically is released close to the date of the show, but at press time, it was known that the Young People's Chorus of New York City will perform.

"Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular" (Bloomberg Television): This event returns to TV with conductor Keith Lockhart again leading the Pops musicians, who are joined by the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and the Middlesex County Volunteers Fifes & Drums.

"Yankee Doodle Dandy" (Turner Classic Movies): TCM never lets an Independence Day pass without showing this 1942 gem, featuring the dazzling performance by James Cagney as master showman George M. Cohan that earned the actor an Oscar.

"Rocky" (AMC): Since the original, Oscar-winning 1976 movie – written by title star Sylvester Stallone – is about a Bicentennial boxing match, there's a good dose of patriotism bundled into Rocky Balboa's bout with champ Apollo Creed (Carl Weathers). The entire series up to "Rocky Balboa" will be shown on this day.

"1776" (Turner Classic Movies): The screen version of the hit musical about the signing of the Declaration of Independence is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. William Daniels, Ken Howard and Howard Da Silva reprise their respective Broadway roles as John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.

"Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope" (TNT): Though this 1977 movie milestone is labeled the fourth chapter of the George Lucas-generated franchise now, devotees know it actually was the first ... and here, it launches a festival of the first three films, also including "The Empire Strikes Back" and "Return of the Jedi."

"The Music Man" (Turner Classic Movies): Hugh Jackman has a Broadway hit with the current revival of the Meredith Willson musical, but in the 1962 screen version, role originator Robert Preston still is Professor Harold Hill to many devotees.

"The Twilight Zone" (Decades): Marathons of Rod Serling's much-revered fantasy-drama series are holiday traditions, upheld this time by a "Decades Binge" event being extended past the usual Saturday-Sunday scheduling through Monday.

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